

to the American Federation of Government Employees, but to civil servants across the country. John Sturdivant demonstrated dedication and courage throughout his entire life, as he battled against Government downsizing, excessive privatization, restrictions on political activity by Government employees and, ultimately, leukemia. Through all of these challenges, he remained a devoted champion of workers everywhere, and his efforts will be long remembered and sorely missed.

John Sturdivant leaves behind him a legacy of victories and improvements that will continue to benefit the employees he represented even though he can no longer speak for them. During a period of relentless attacks on Federal workers, through Government downsizing and budget pressures, John fought to preserve jobs and spoke out for the interests of working families everywhere. He struggled against two wasteful Government shutdowns, and tirelessly advocated for improved conditions, pay raises and better retirement benefits for those he represented. John Sturdivant was instrumental in bringing about Hatch Act reforms which enable Federal employees to contribute money, attend fundraisers and volunteer for campaign work. In short, he was a great friend for workers and a great voice for change, and his passing leaves us missing a powerful and passionate ally.

SECRETARY BABBITT'S ABUSE OF POWER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nevada [Mr. GIBBONS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today in disbelief, in fact in total disgust. I stand here before you in an effort to seek the truth in campaign fund-raising allegations involving the Secretary of Interior, Mr. Bruce Babbitt, a serious abuse of power.

I am here to inform my colleagues of the mounting evidence that Secretary Babbitt potentially misused his administrative position to influence the outcome of a 1995 Department of Interior decision regarding an Indian gaming permit to a group of Chippewa Indians in Wisconsin, all that in exchange for political contributions to the Democratic National Committee.

Allow me to set the stage. Three groups of Wisconsin Chippewa Indians recently filed a lawsuit charging that the Clinton administration bowed to improper political pressure when the Interior Department rejected their application for a gaming permit in 1995.

So what was the reason for this otherwise unexplainable denial? Well, other tribes opposing their application donated more than \$270,000 to the Democratic National Committee soon after their proposal was rejected. The rival tribes were trying to prevent competition to their lucrative gaming interests located some 20 miles from Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN.

Now, Mr. Paul Eckstein, an attorney and old friend of Mr. Babbitt, recently testified before a Senate Governmental Affairs panel on campaign fund-raising hearings that he met with Secretary

Babbitt on July 14, 1995, after being told by another Interior Department official that the casino planned by 3 Wisconsin Chippewa tribes was being disapproved. Eckstein proceeded to tell the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee that Mr. Babbitt's response was that Deputy White House Chief of Staff, Harold Ickes, had directed him to issue the decision that day. In a 1996 letter to Senator JOHN MCCAIN, a Republican of Arizona, the Interior Secretary denied making the comment about Ickes. But last month, Mr. Babbitt again recanted, acknowledging that he did, in fact, make the remarks to Mr. Eckstein simply to get the lawyer out of his office.

Well, the contradiction in Secretary Babbitt's responses troubles me almost as much as the act of trading favors for campaign money. The blatant misuse of administrative power for monetary gain is a serious offense. If no other inconsistencies were uncovered beyond this, this would still warrant the appointment of an independent counsel.

At issue in this case is whether Secretary Babbitt's decision to deny the application was influenced by the promise of political contributions and whether his actions came as a result of an order from higher up in the administrative ladder.

Mr. Speaker, it is not my intent to stand here before the House in an attempt to influence the outcome of this case, nor to comment on any more specific details of the event that precipitated this matter. However, the apparent seriousness of the allegations of this wrongdoing and underlying facts clearly dictate further investigations into this matter.

I have in my office investigative reports, many from major news publications on this subject, that confirm in precise detail the pervasive, serious and potentially unlawful conduct of Secretary Babbitt's 1995 decision.

The likelihood that government policy was made in return for a political donation in this case clearly brings into question whether criminal misconduct occurred in fund-raising efforts for the 1996 Federal election.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to inform you of major malfunctions in the campaign fund-raising machine for the 1996 election, and I am also here to inform my colleagues of my intent to pursue this matter further.

In fact, I would like to report on Friday of last week I sent a letter to the Attorney General, lauding the Justice Department's decision to open a 30-day initial review into how Secretary Babbitt handled the application for an Indian gaming permit back in 1995. But this is not enough. In this same letter I expressed my earnest sense of urgency on behalf of the American people in pushing forth with the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate this scandal.

SHADY DEALS TO JAM FAST TRACK THROUGH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House for a few minutes this evening.

I read earlier today a story on the AP wire about some of the deals that have been made between the White House and Members of Congress on the fast track legislation which we were going to consider today, but has been pushed back until Sunday, frankly because Speaker GINGRICH and the President do not have enough votes with the deals they are making to jam this bill through the Congress of the United States.

What troubled me today, and I would like to share for a moment one of those deals that was mentioned in the AP wire story. I will quote:

A Member of Congress announced his support for a fast track trade bill Friday after the White House circulated a 7-point memo promising continued support for the tobacco price support program and immunity from health-related lawsuits for tobacco farmers.

The paper also promised reform of import duty rules that farmers say encourages imports of foreign tobacco. Lobbyists said the moves were aimed at garnering the Congressmen's support.

This deal is troubling for a whole bunch of reasons, Mr. Speaker. As the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Health and Environment on the Committee on Commerce, the subcommittee that, under the leadership before of the gentleman from California [Mr. WAXMAN] and other Members of Congress brought forward many of the problems with tobacco, many of the issues with tobacco executives and some of the problems, particularly with teenaged smoking, and I am particularly concerned about this deal that the President has purportedly made, according to the AP wire story, with some Members of Congress in order to get their votes for the fast track legislation.

Immediately, upon reading this story, I called the White House to ask for a copy of this 7-point memo that was about tobacco, about protecting tobacco, that would bring in the support from Members of Congress for the fast track bill.

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The White House has still refused to send this memo. For whatever reason, they have not felt obligated to send this memo, even though next week this Subcommittee on Health and Environment and the full Committee on Commerce will be holding a hearing on tobacco.

So what troubles me, and I think what troubles people across this country, is that on a trade issue, an issue that has nothing to do with tobacco,